



GUIDE TO PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITY WHAT ALL CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES NEED TO KNOW

The CPS Ethics Advisor and CPS Ethics Committee send this memorandum to remind you about the provisions of the Board of Education' Code of Ethics (<http://policy.cps.k12.il.us/documents/503.1.pdf>) with respect to prohibited political activity. Please carefully review the summary below and call or email Andra Gomberg, the Ethics Advisor, at 773-553-1312 or agomberg@cps.k12.il.us with any questions. **IF YOU ARE AWARE OF ANY VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF ETHICS WITH RESPECT TO POLITICAL ACTIVITY, PLEASE CONTACT ANDRA GOMBERG OR THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, JAMES SULLIVAN, AT 773-534-9400.**

POLITICAL ACTIVITY DURING COMPENSATED BOARD TIME

Employees are prohibited from engaging in political activities including but not limited to the following **during compensated Board time** (with the exception of vacation, personal, or furlough days):

- Hosting or participating in any kind of political event
- Soliciting contributions or votes on behalf of a candidate
- Planning, conducting, or participating in public opinion polls or surveys of voters or candidate questionnaires
- Assisting at the polls on election days or in any recount or challenge to elections
- Participating in any activity related to campaigning for any elective office, including wearing any political paraphernalia (i.e. t-shirts or buttons), displaying posters in Board work space
- Campaigning or working for or against a referendum question
- Serving as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention

OTHER PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITY

At no time shall any Board member, supervisor or employee:

- Require any employee to perform any political activity as part of his or her duties, or as a condition of employment or during any time off compensated by the Board
- Require any employee to participate in any political activity in consideration for any additional compensation, benefit, salary adjustment, bonus, compensatory time off or for continued employment, or award such consideration
- Deny or deprive any person of employment or tenure solely because he or she is a member or an officer of a political committee, a political party or a political organization or club
- Misappropriate any Board property or resources (such as photocopiers, Board issued email addresses, etc.) for any prohibited political activity
- Misappropriate the services of any Board employee to perform political activity

USE OF BOARD PROPERTY

Political organizations or candidates requesting the use of Board property (i.e. school building, school parking lot, etc.), shall be treated the same as other organizations seeking a license for the commercial use of Board property. The Board requires that the applicant: secure an approved School Usage Permit; pay all expenses associated with use of the property; and satisfy any other Board requirements, including the provision of adequate insurance. The Tenant User Liability Insurance Program (TULIP) can be used to procure insurance if an organization does not have a current insurance program. More information regarding the TULIP program can be found by calling 312-595-7178. Any filming requires a specific agreement issued by the Communications Office and the Law Department. Political organizations cannot use Board property during school hours or any other time that a school building is otherwise in use. The role of the school is limited solely to the provision of the property and shall not extend to the provision of participants, supplies or other resources. All media events proposed to be held during school hours must be approved by the Communications Office.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. When may Board employees engage in political activity?

A. Any time that they are on their personal (off-work hours, vacation or furlough) time.

Q. Do I have to give access to my building to political candidates?

A. No. However, if you permit access by a particular candidate or political campaign you must permit access by all candidates or campaigns. Also you may be required to permit access by all community organizations. The same concept applies if you refuse access by an applicant.

Q. When is it permissible for candidates to use or occupy Board property?

A. Political campaigns should be treated the same as other community organizations. Campaigns may enter into agreements to use school property anytime the property is available for public use and provided no school activities are scheduled. Campaigns must satisfy the requirements listed above under USE OF BOARD PROPERTY.

Q. Can a local elected official, who is also a candidate for a different office, visit the school?

A. Yes. Current elected officials (including LSC members) may visit schools and act in the capacity of their current office without triggering a violation of the ethics policy. However, if elected officials campaign or advocate for another office or on behalf of another candidate for office, then it is likely that an ethics violation will result. The advocating elected official should apply for use of the building as described above.

Q. Can I control media access to the building?

A. Yes. School administration may control any activity which may impact the school environment. In the case of the media it is best to contact the Communications Office for assistance. You may call Monique Bond at 773-553-1620.

Q. What should I do if a candidate wants to film his or her visit to my school?

A. You should follow the procedure outlined above in the section titled USE OF BOARD PROPERTY. For issues involving filming you should also contact Monique Bond at 773-553-1620 in the Communications Office and Daymon Ruttenberg at 773-553-1740 in the Law Department.

Q. Can I stop a candidate from speaking during the public comment section of a LSC meeting?

A. No. Any member of the public may speak during the public comment section of the meeting provided they comply with the rules for speaking. However, speakers should not use this forum for political purposes. In the event that a speaker makes political comments, we recommend that you immediately remind the audience that political speeches are prohibited.



Q. A candidate has asked me to give him time on the LSC agenda for him to talk about his plans for elective office. What should I do?

A. LSC meetings are official meetings for school business. The LSC chair, who sets the agenda for the meeting, should advise candidates that, if the chair gave the floor to a candidate to make a speech, it would appear that the school and the LSC are endorsing a candidate for public office. This action would violate the prohibition against prohibited political activity in the ethics code.